

RULERS SINS

The Causes of National Judgments :

O R, A

SERMON

Preach'd at the Fast, upon the 26th
Day of December 1650.

By Mr. Patrick Gillespie, Minister of the Gospel at
Glasgow.

To which is annexed, A SERMON upon
the Difficulty of Conversion, by Mr. John
Walwood.

*Prov. xiv. 34. Righteousness exalteth a Nation; but Sin is
a Reproach to any People.*

*1 Kings xvii. 22, 23. Sin the Children of Israel walked
in all the Sins of Jeroboam, which he did; they departed
not from them, until the Lord had removed Israel out of
the Land.*

*Jer. xix. 4. And Fire is kindled out of a Rod of her Branch,
which hath devoured her Fruit, so that she hath no
Rod to be a Scepter to rule.*

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RULERS SINS

The Causes of National Judgments, &c.

II Kings, Chap. xxiii. Ver. 26.

Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the Fierceness of his great Wrath, wherewith his Anger was kindled against Judah, because of the Provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.



HIS is the Close of the History of the great Reformation wrought by *Josiah*, whereof we may read from the Beginning of the Chapter hitherto; and it is a strange Close of such a Story; for it was a great Reformation that he wrought in

Judah: And the 25th Verse says of him, *That like unto him was no King before him, that turned to the Lord with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, and with all his Might, according to all the Law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him. And yet, notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the Fierceness of his Wrath.*

In the Words we have Three Things. 1. There is God's Anger against *Judah* described, in the Height of it, and in the Length of it. The Height of it,

his Anger was kindled, and it was great Wrath, and Fierceness of Wrath; the Length of it, the Lord turned not away from this his great and fierce Anger and Wrath. As the Flame rose high, so it burnt long.

2. The Cause or Reason wherefore, *Because of all the Provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal.* This *Manasseh* was late King of *Judah*, and was dead about Thirty Years before this Time; yea, and before he died, upon his Repentance, had gotten Mercy for his Sins, and yet *the fierce Anger of the Lord is not turned away from Judah, because of all the Provocations of Manasseh.* This may seem strange.

3. But that which seems most strange of all, is the 3d Part of the Text, *Notwithstanding*, that is, for all the great Reformation that was wrought in *Judah* in *Josiah's* Days and notwithstanding of *Josiah's* turning to the Lord with all his Heart, and with all his Soul, and with all his Might: For it relates to all the Chapter going before, especially Verse 25.

The Words are plain; I will stay no more on the Explication, neither will I gather every Thing that might occur, but some chief Points only that most suit with the present Occasion.

1. We consider the Context, which is as strange as readily we read again in Scripture. *Josiah* works a great Reformation in *Judah*; like unto him there was no King before him, neither after him arose there any like him, who turned to GOD with all his Heart, and yet notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the Fierceness of his Wrath. Hence observe, "That the Persons and honest Endeavours of the Lord's Worthies, that do their uttermost for turning away the Lord's Wrath from his People, may be graciously accepted with him, when their Labours and Endeavours come to little Purpose, and are ineffectual for the turning away

" of

“ of his Wrath and Anger.” There is here a Testimony given to *Josiah*, That like unto him there was no King before him, neither after him, and yet his Work came to nothing, in respect of his main Design, the turning away of God’s Wrath from *Judah*. Take the Proposition by Parts, and it will be the more clear. 1. The honest Endeavours of worthy Instruments in the Lord’s Work, which they use for turning away his Anger from his People, may come to little Purpose, and prove ineffectual for that End. And this comes to pass Two Ways. 1. When that very Thing they do for this End, doth miscarry among their Hands. How many of the Lord’s Servants have followed honest and great Endeavours in their Generation, that have come to nothing in respect of the End they aimed at, that is, the turning away of Wrath from People, by turning them to God? *Jeremiah*, an eminent Instrument, and as tender of God’s Glory, and the Good of his People, as any we read of, yet, look through all his Prophecy, when he hath done his utmost, he can prevail nothing either with King, Princes, Priests, nor People; and often he is tempted to quit the Work, and yet falls to it again. So *Chap. 20. 7, 8, 9. I am a Derision daily; every one mocketh me: For since I spake, I cried out, I cried Violence and Spoil, because the Word of the Lord was made a Reproach. Then I said, I will not make Mention of him, nor speak any more in his Name. But his Word was in my Heart, as a burning Fire, &c.* *Elijah*, another of the most eminent Instruments that ever was heard tell of, he labours much to prevent Wrath, (*1 Kings 18. v. 37, 38.*) by turning the People to God; he gathers all the Kingdom together, and convinces them of their evil Way, and of the Difference betwixt God and *Baal*, and

and causes slay the Priests of *Baal*: Yet the next Day, as *Chap.* 19. 2, 3. he is fain to flee, and hide himself from the Persecution of *Jezebel*. 2. Not only may their Endeavours come to nought by Miscarrying, but even when they have done the Work they intended, they may miss their Design. And this is that which is here spoken of. What was *Josiah* his great Aim and Design? We may read it, 2 *Kings* 22. 11, 13, &c. That he, and the People being humbled, the great Wrath of the Lord might be turned away. He goes about an outward Reformation, and he gets it wrought, and his own Heart is humbled before the Lord; but he gets not the Lord turned from his fierce Anger and Wrath, which was kindled against *Judah*, for all that.

The second Part of the Proposition is, That even when it is so, that the honest Endeavours of the Lord's worthy Servants, for turning away of God's Wrath, come to nought, yet even then they, in their Persons and Endeavours, are graciously accepted, and highly commended of him; so Verse 25. *Josiah* gets the highest Testimony and Commendation that hath been given to Men on Earth. *Moses*, *Joshua*, *David*, *Solomon*, and all these Worthies, that prevailed often with God to turn away his Anger from his People, are no more commended, and some of them not so much as *Josiah* here. That which I would say for Application of this, I draw it to these Three Uses.

Use 1. This speaks sad Things to the Kingdom, whilst we consider, that the honest Endeavours of publick and gracious Instruments come to nought. It says, The Lord is not turned from the Fierceness of his Anger towards the Land. *Josiah* essayed this, and it would not be with him. And there are a

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Number of honest-hearted Men, who have stretched their Endeavours to the utmost for this End ; and when their Endeavours miscarry, it speaks yet more Wrath to the Land.

Use 2. It may be for the Comfort of any, whose Hearts are sad throughout the Kingdom, for the breaking of the honest Party, that would fain have turned away the Lord's Wrath. I know there are many, who are glad and rejoice at it, which is a black Mark on them : But I know also, there are many, whose Hearts are smitten with Sorrow, to whom (I say) this is Ground of Comfort, that tho' the Endeavours of that honest Party have been Ineffectual, yet their Persons and Service have been accepted, and are in high Estimation with the Lord. This may comfort under the Sadness of Heart and Reproach of Men, that they ly under, and under all the Sufferings they endure, and against the Wrath of the Lord, that appears to be not yet turned away. Reason, *The Lord renders to every Man according to his Work, Rom. 2.6.* and not according to every Construction put upon it, not according to the Success it hath ; therefore let the broken Forces & broken Hearted, who sympathize with them, comfort themselves in this, the Acceptation and Commendation of Christ. There shall be Glory, and Honour, and Immortality and Eternal Life put upon them, when Indignation, Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish shall be upon the Contentious, who do not obey the Truth, but obey Unrighteousness. *Josiah* is accepted and commended for his Works, when the Lord's Wrath is not turned away.

Use, 3. For Encouragement to all to joyn in the Duty of this Day ; and I shall speak this the rather, because I know many godly Hearts are ready to
look

look hopelessly on this Day's Work, or that, for all that can be done, the Lord's Controversy will take no End. But if thou, for thy Part, honestly endeavour to turn away the Controversy, though the Wrath of the Lord should burn against them, for whom thou art humbled, and wrestles with the Lord for that End, thou and thy Service shall be accepted and commended of GOD. Therefore trouble not your selves with what GOD will do with the King or Rulers, but be found in your Duty, as *Samuel*, 1 *Sam.* 12. 23. *God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you :* And *Chap.* 16. 1. He mourned for *Saul*, Thy Endeavours in thy Duty shall be no less accepted, though God should never be pacified with this evil Generation, but should sweep us all away. 2 *Cor.* 2. 15. We are unto God a sweet Savour of Christ in them that are saved, and in them that perish. And to clear and confirm this Point to the full, read. *Ija.* 49. v 4. where the Prophet, speaking in Christ's Name, and in his own Name, and in the Name of all the Lord's faithful Instruments that shall have a Finger at his Work to the End of the World, proposing an Objection, saith, *Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my Strength for nought, and in vain.* But what is his Answer? *Then*, said he, *my Judgment is with the Lord, and my Work with my God.* Deal thou honestly in thy Duty, and though Wrath be not turned from the King, nor the Land, thy Person and Work shall be accepted and commended.

2. *Observe*, That " the Lord's Anger may be
 " so kindled, and burn so fiercely against his own
 " People, that by no Means it shall be turned away,
 " till he have taken Vengeance on them, till his
 " Anger

“ Anger break out and consume them. There are many Examples of this in Scripture: There is one, for all that *Jesab* could do, the *Wrath* of the Lord was not turned away from Judah until he removed them out of his Sight. So it was with the House of Eli, 1 Sam. 3. 14. I have sworn unto the House of Eli, that the Iniquity of his House shall not be purged with Sacrifice nor Offering for ever. Ezek. 14. 14. Though these three Men, Noah Daniel and Job were in it, they should deliver but their own Souls by their Righteousness. And Jer. 15. 1. Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my Mind could not be towards this People: cast them out of my Sight, and let them go forth. This is a Point, which sometimes ye have had occasion to hear of; and that which I would speak of it in Application, I shall draw to these two things. 1. How it may be known, when the Lord's *Wrath* is so kindled, that by no means, neither outward Reformation, nor true Repentance, it will be turned away from a People, till it consume them. 2. What may be in our Condition, that speaks ought to this Purpose. As to the first, Such a Thing may be known by diligent Observers of God's Way and Working, who may be Prognosticators of the Time when God's Anger is come to this height; for the Lord is angry at his People for their Stupidity, and Neglect of seeking and knowing to take up this. Jer. 8. 7. The Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed Times, and the Turtle, and the Cran, and the Swallow observe the Time of their coming; but my People know not the Judgments of the Lord. Hos. 7. 9. Strangers have devoured his Strength, and he knoweth it not; yea, gray Hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth it not, that is, Prognostications of their Ruin which they

did not observe. *Math. 16. 3.* Christ reproves the *Pharisees*, because *they could discern the Face the Skie, but had no Understanding to discern the Signs of the Time:* And what was like to come upon that Generation?

Now I will not dip far in this Point; Politicians and some Divines do speak of the fatal Periods of Kingdoms, but what they say is not our Rule. We find one sure Rule in the Word, according to which the Lord hath proceeded through the whole of Scripture from the Beginning to this Day, and it is this, There is a Measure of Iniquity which the Lord hath set to a Kingdom, or People, which when it is accomplished, or filled up, out must his Wrath go, to ruin that Kingdom or People, *Gen. 15. 16. The Iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. Math. 23. 32. Fill ye up then the Measure of your Fathers.* And when that Measure is filled up, then shall not be one Stone left upon another, that shall not be thrown down: And *Zeck 5. 6.* we have a Vision of an *Ephah*, and a *Talent of Lead*, a Woman sitting in the *Ephah*, &c. The Key of the Vision, is in a Word, *this is Wickedness:* There was a Measure of Sin and Wickedness which that Nation had to fill up, and when they had filled up the Measure, a Talent of Lead is cast upon the Mouth of the Ephah, *and the Ephah is carried to the Land of Shinar. Ezek. 21. 25. And thou profane wicked Prince of Israel, whose Day is come, when Iniquity shall have an End:* When the Cup of thy Sin is full, thou shalt not Sin a Day longer. This is a Rule that has never yet failed, from the Beginning of the World. But what are the Evidences whereby it may be known, that the Cup of a Land's Sins is full? And we may speak and hear of

of them with Fear and Trembling. 1. This is certainly one Evidence ; it goes ordinarily with the Overflowing and Abounding of Sin, Gen. 6. 5, 12. *The Lord said, he would destroy Man, because the wickedness of Man was great, for all Flesh had corrupted his Way upon Earth.* 2. When Folks sin proudly and incorrigibly, it is an Evidence the Cup of their Sin is near full, and ruining Wrath approaching. 2 Chron. 36. 16. *They mocked the Messengers of God, and despised his Words, and misused his Prophets ; until the Wrath of the Lord arose against his People, till there was no Remedy.* Isa. 1. 5. *Why should ye be stricken any more ? ye will revolt more and more.* Isa. 3. 9. *The shew of their Countenance doth witness against them, and they declare their Sin as Sodom, and they hid it not : VVo unto their Soul, &c.* 3. A third Evidence is, when it comes to this, That these to whom God has given Power and Authority become Ringleaders in Sin and sinful Courses. Isa. 3. 12. *O my People, they who lead thee, cause thee to err, and destroy the Way of thy Paths.* Jer. 5. 5. *I will get me unto the great Men, and will speak unto them ; but these have all together broken the Yoke, and burst the Bands, wherefore a Lyon out of the Forest shall slay them, and a VVolf of the Evening shall spoil them, a Leopard shall watch over their Cities, every one that goeth out thence shall, be torn in Pieces.* 4. And when, added to all the former, the Lord has sent lesser and smaller Judgments upon a People, and these do no Good, to reclaim them from Sin. Ezek. 24. 13. *after the Vision of the great Pot, the Lord says, Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged from thy Filthiness any more, till I have caused my Fury to rest upon thee. I shall not stay*
upon

upon the Application of these Evidences: Take it in a Word, I doubt, if there be one of all these Four Evidences, I have named, wanting in Scotland's Condition this Day.

For 1. Hath not Sin overflowed all Ranks, like a Speat? 2. Do not Men sin proudly and incorrigibly? 3. For these in publick Places of Trust and Power, that should bear down Sin, are they not rather Ringleaders in Sin? And 4. Have we not been under lesser Judgments these Years past, and yet we revolt more and more?

As to the 2d, What may be in our Condition, that speaks out God's fierce Wrath? Besides what hath been said in the former Word of Application, I shall only add these Three Things more. 1. When a People, after Strokes, sin still, and sin more, and wax worse and worse; *Psal. 78. 32. For all this they sinned still.* And has not the Land sinned more, and gone further back after the Stroke at *Dumbar* than before? And yet further, after the late Stroke at *Hamilton*? 2. The Lord's taking away of the Righteous with the Wicked, is one of the saddest Tokens of fierce Wrath that can be, when it is not the Vile only, but the Godly also. *Isa. 57. 1. The righteous perish, and no Man layeth it to Heart, and merciful Men are taken away, none considering that the Righteous is taken away from the Evil to come; that is an Evidence of sore Wrath coming; And Ezek. 21. 4. Seeing then that I will cut off from thee, the Righteous and the Wicked; therefore shall my Sword go forth out of his Sheath against all Flesh from the South to the North.* 3. The Lord is beginning with Judgment at the Best of the Land, or at these Parts of the Land, wherein, I may say comparatively, most of Religion, and manifest Seekers of God are to be found; and when

When these Parts are begun at, what may other Parts of the Land expect? *Luke 23. 31. If they do these Things in a green Tree, what shall be done in the dry?* When the *West*, which was known to have more Religion than the *North*, is begun at, judge what they may expect.

3. Observe, That God is sometimes angry with a Kingdom, and so angry, as his fierce Wrath shall not be turned away from them, for the Sins of their King: Therefore the Sins of *Manasseh* are given for the Cause of all the fierce Wrath against *Judah*; and *2 Chron. 28. 19.* The Lord brought *Judah* low, because of *Achaz* King of *Judah*, for he made *Judah* naked, &c. So God may be many Times angry, and his Anger kindle and burn hot and long against a People for the Sins of their King, as here for *Manasseh's* Sin, remediless Wrath goes out against the Land: Because the Kingdom was not free of the King's Sin; therefore they might be the more justly judged. Look either to *Jer. 15. 4, 6.* or *2 Kings 21. 5, to 10,* and this will be clear. Now, Three Ways was the Kingdom of *Judah* involved in the Guilt of *Manasseh's* Sins. 1. By their Connivance at his Sin; the People and Rulers should not have suffered him to go on in these Abominations; but as they withstood *Uzziah*, *2 Chron. 26. 18.* so should they have done him. 2. They did not mourn for the King's Sin, *Ezek. 9,* therefore they were guilty. 3. They were guilty also by Imitation, *2 Chr. 33. 9, 10.* *Manasseh made Judah and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the Heathen, and the Lord spake to Manasseh and to his People, but they would not hearken.* All the Kingdoms wheeled about in the Defection with him. Now *Manasseh's* Sins were chiefly Two. 1. Against the Worship of God.

God. 2. Against the Blood of God's People ; he gave himself to all Sorts of Idolatry, and corrupted the pure Worship of God, and he made the Streets of *Jerusalem* to run with the Blood of God's People : And we have heard, that these are the main Sins pointed at in the Paper that was read, which may be reduced to these Two Heads. 1. The Opposition, made by the King and his Predecessors, to the Covenant and Work of God, and corrupting of the Worship of God. And 2dly, The shedding of so much innocent Blood. For Application of this Point, I shall speak to this Purpose, to let you see, That when the Lord was so wroth with *Judab* for the Sins of *Manasseh*, how much more Reason the Lord hath to be wroth with *Scotland* for the Sins of their Kings : And I shall hold it forth to you in these Two. 1. I shall shew you what there is in our Condition and Estate, that speaks more Wrath to us, than what was in the Condition and Estate of *Judab*, that did speak Wrath to them. 2. I shall shew you how just Reason and Cause there is to charge the King's Sins on this Kingdom : And I shall speak a little to these Two the rather, because I fear there be many that look upon the Causes of this Humiliation, as Things that they are not much concerned in.

As to the *First*, What is in our Condition more than was in the Condition of *Judab*, that speaks more Wrath to us for the Sins of our Kings, I shall draw it to these Particulars. 1. If the Fierceness of God's Wrath past against *Judab* for the Sins of *Manasseh* in the following Generation, which the foregoing Generation had sinned, how much more Reason have we of the present Generation to fear the fierce Wrath of the Lord go forth against us ; for we must

must have a greater Sibness to the King's Sins in the present Generation, than the Kingdom of *Judah* could have to the King's Sins done in the former Generation. 2. If the Lord was so angry against *Judah* for the Sins of one King, although both *Hezekiah*, that did reign before him, and *Josiah*, that did succeed him, were gracious Kings, and free of his Sins; how much more Reason have we to apprehend fierce Wrath against this Kingdom for the Sins of a Family; that is not terminate in one Person, but hath gone along in a continued Opposition to the Work of God, and the Persecution of his People, from the Grandfather to the Son, and from the Son to the Grandchild, from the very Beginning of their Reign? 3. If the Lord was angry, and his Wrath was kindled against *Judah*, for the Provocations of *Manasseh*, though he did repent, and obtained Mercy ere he died, and reformed what was wrong in many Things, how much more have we Reason to apprehend Wrath for the Sins of a King, who, when the Lord brought him low, did never Thing, for ought we know, or was made known to the World, of his Repentance. *Manasseh*, in the Time of his Distress, and when he was laid in Irons, mourned and found Mercy; and yet notwithstanding, fierce Wrath comes on *Judah* for his Provocations: May we not then be afraid of Wrath for our late King's Sins, of whose Repentance the World never heard? 4. If the Lord's fierce Wrath went out against *Judah* for the Sins of *Manasseh*, notwithstanding his Grandchild *Josiah* was a gracious Man, and was not accessory to his Sins, but did repent for them, how much more Reason have we to apprehend fierce Wrath for the Sins of the Son, who has followed his Father

ther and Grandfather's Footsteps, as the Paper relates?

5. If the Lord's fierce Wrath went out against *Judab*, for the Provocations of *Manasseh*, notwithstanding his Son *Josiah* began early to be a gracious Instrument of Reformation, was truly gracious himself, and gave Evidence of true Humiliation for the Sins of his Father (as *Chap. 22. 13. Because thine Heart was tender, and thou hast humbled thy self before the Lord*-----) how much more then hath this Kingdom Cause to fear the fierce Wrath of the Lord, for the Sins of this same King, and his Opposition to the Work of God, who did not begin early to humble himself before God, and in whom, as yet, for ought that can be seen, there is no Evidence of Humiliation, but rather pregnant Evidences to the contrary? And do ye not think it then a Matter that concerns you to mourn for the King's Sins, and for the Sins of his Father and Grandfather, when ye see how great and fierce Wrath goes out against *Judab* for the Sins of one King that ruled there, notwithstanding he repented and obtained Pardon?

As to the *Second*, That ye may see yet more what Cause and Reason ye have to mourn, let us see how far the Kingdom has been involved in the King's Sin, and how justly it may be charged on the Kingdom. And to hold out this to you a little, I shall go no further back than the Causes of this *Fast*: Consider therefore how the publick Representative Bodies of the Kingdoms had no small Accession to the Defection of the King's Grandfather; for did he not draw Parliaments and Nobles, and many in the Church after him, and to have Accession in the Guilt of the Change of Government in the Church, and in corrupting the

the Worship of God by *Popish* Ceremonies, and in persecuting faithful Ministers, who opposed the same. 2. If we look to the second Step, the Sins of the present King's Father, how many of all Sorts were involved in the Guilt of Blood with him; some by counselling, others by Connivance, others by assisting, and holding of him on in that Way, and others by taking Commission from him to that Effect: And hath not *Scotland* Cause to mourn for that? 3. Look to the Third Step, the Sins of the present King, whether we look to any Thing he did before his coming to this Kingdom, or since: Have not many in the Kingdom been involved in his Guilt the same Way, by consenting and counselling to, and holding him on in a sinful Way, in Opposition to God's Work, and by taking Commissions from him, especially in the late Passage of his deserting the Councils and publick Judicatories of the Kingdom, wherein Numbers, not only of the old rotten Malignants, but many others who are not yet known, will be found guilty. 4. The King's Sin may be charged on the Kingdom, though it were for no other Reason but this, That many who have withstood his Opposition to the Work of God, never mourned for his Sin in so doing; as *Ezra* and *Daniel*, and other godly Men of old, did. And the King's Sin becomes the Kingdom's Sin, in so far as it is not mourned for, and repented of. 5. The Lord hath yet more Cause to charge the King's Sin on the Kingdom, because of our Way of carrying on, and closing a Treaty with him, without Evidences of any real Change in him; not but I do think (though some be of a contrary Judgment) a King may be a King, and a lawful King, and a People may have a good Life under him, though he be not

a regenerate Man, albeit I confess he would be the better of that ; but the Treaty was carried on, and closed with him, without clear Evidences of his joining cordially in the Cause and Covenant, and forsaking the Counsels and Company of Malignants, and the Men not as careful for Christ's Interest, as they were for the King's Interest, and their own.

6. We are yet further involved in this Guilt, if we consider what the Carriage of the Kingdom hath been since he came in among us ; what Good hath been seen or heard ; and what Company hath been about him ; that if ever the King should turn an Enemy to the Work of God (which the Lord forbid) we cannot think but these should be guilty of his so doing, who have let him see nothing, but what may confirm him in his former Principles, and cause him think, that the Covenant for God and Religion hath been but a politic Draught, for Mens particular Interests and Ends. And when they have committed the same Sin, which they bid him and us mourn for, is it not the high Way to harden the the King's Heart, and to make him think he did right, when he employed the *Irishes* in his Strait, and of late betook him to the Malignants, when he conceived he was in Straits ? And considering these Things, hath not the Kingdom come to the King, and not he to them ? and have they not rather laid a Snare for the King, than brought him out of the Snare wherein he was ?

3. I shall only name another Point, and it is this ; There may be something, which in our Eye looks like the turning away of God's Wrath from the Kingdom, which will not prove real for the Aversion of it ; *Notwithstanding the Lord turned not from the Fierceness of his great Anger.* There are Two Things

in this *Notwithstanding*. 1. Notwithstanding of the outward Reformation wrought in Judah by *Josiah*. 2. Which is more terrible, notwithstanding of the true Repentance of *Josiah* the King's Son, which seemed very promising to the People of God, the fierce Wrath of the Lord was not turned away. So, though outward Reformation were never so exactly gone about, both upon the King's Part, and the Kingdom's Part. Nay, though true Grace and Repentance were given to a King, and many in the Kingdom, God's fierce Wrath may pursue, and not be turned away for all that. The King may be humbled, and get Repentance, as here *Josiah* got, and yet the Lords Controversy not turned away from the Royal Family, nor from the Kingdoms. And what great Cause of Fear and Trembling then may we have, when there is so little of either of these to be seen amongst us, whether we look to the King, or to his People; and to walk humbly, and to mourn and wrestle with the Lord this Day, and afterward, that at least, if Wrath shall not be turned from the Land, but the overflowing Scourge go through from the South to the North, Wrath may be turned from the Men and Women that repent, and they may find Mercy, and be hid in the Day of the Lord's Anger?

A SERMON preached by Mr. John Walwood,

Upon I Pet. iv. Vers. 18.

And if the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Ungodly and Sinner appear?

IT is a great Matter for a Man to win to Heaven, even for a Man that is very faithful and serious. It is true, there be many that think to be saved; I think there be few of you, but ye will think ye will come to Heaven; but I fear, not the Tenth Man, nor the Twentieth Man of you come there. Nay, it is strange, that even every ungodly and profane Man think all to come to Heaven. Any Body that will but observe the Delusion of the Sons of Men, speak to godless men, or to natural Men, that know nothing of Heart-work, or of the Experience of Religion, ask them if they be in Favour with God, or think to win to Heaven? Yea, they think that every Dog will win there. I believe, ye think, that Heaven will be (to speak so, with Reverence to that glorious Place) a Cage of unclean Creatures; I'll tell you, no such Thing at all; there will be few Folks that will come there: Read *Psal. 15.* *Lord, who shall abide in thy Tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy Hill? &c. Isa. 33. Verse 14. Who among us shall dwell with devouring Fire? Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting Burnings? Who will be able to stand before him in that Day?*

Now

Now we shall shortly hint at some Things in general, and shall give some Reasons why the Righteous are hardly saved. As, 1. Because that none are so righteous, but they have their own Faults, their own Sins and Failings; none so righteous, but they have their own Strayings. *David* confesses, *Psal.* 119. *Verse* 176. *He had gone astray like a lost Sheep.* 2. Because God is a very holy God, a spotless God, and therefore it is very much (so to say) to live with him; not that he is an unmerciful God, or any way cruel, but is so holy a God: These being compared, the Corruption that remains in the Holiest of Men, and the spotless Holiness of God, and that infinite Indignation that he has at Sin; I say, comparing these together, it is no wonder that the holiest Men find Difficulty in coming to Heaven. In *Psal.* 51. *v.* 8. *David* speaks of broken Bones; and in *Psal.* 32. *v.* 3. of roaring all the Day long. But leaving this, we shall add some few Uses, and then we shall end.

Use 1. Is it so, that the Righteous are hardly saved, then we think we may conclude, there will be few saved in this Generation, when the Lord comes to judge and reckon with it; for we think it more than probable, if ye consider the Revolutions of these Times, and how long God has spared us, there are sad Days a coming on these Lands; when God comes to judge these Lands, and to bring Wrath and Anger upon them, it will be hard for the most godly and serious, that have kept cleanest Garments, to be saved in that Day. Indeed *Jeremiah*, *Caleb* and *Joshua*, *Lot* and *Abraham*, and the like of these escaped, when the Lord poured out his Wrath upon these wicked Generations wherein they lived; but indeed they were odd Sort of Persons. Then

Then consider, if it has been so in the green Tree, what will be done in the dry? Luke 23. v. 31. If the Lord has chastened his People, and if he hath so sharply smitten them, if their Blood has been shed, and their Heads set up in the View of the World; if they have met with great Tossings and Troubles; Then what may we judge shall come on an ungodly Party? What will come on the Malignants and Prelates? What will come on our States and our Church-folks? What will come on our Magistrates and Clergy, and upon the ungodly People of the Land? Think ye, if the Lord hath dealt so sharply with his own House and People, that he will pass them? Nay, I will tell you, the Lord hath a Sword prepared for our King, for our Counsellors, for our Courtiers, for Nobles, for Declaration Takers, for Prelates, for Curates, for lukewarm Gentlemen, &c. and his Sword that is bathed in Heaven, will come down upon Idumea, the People of his Curse, Isa. 34. v. 5. I am sure, it will be a hard Matter to escape that Day: There be many Folk that think, they'll jowk, and let the Jaw go over them; many think they will live at Ease in Zion; and others think they'll be wise, and keep a whole Skin, and keep their Estates, their Lands and Trades, and will not appear for God when he is calling them.

Well, the Lord will send some Stroke or Ruin, that will not only come on these Folks that are not for God, but it will come on all Sorts of People. Truly we think, 'tis terrible to think on that Day of the Lord that's coming. As for our Rulers, they have acted strongly and mightily against the Lord, and they say, *The Lord hath forsaken the Earth*; yea, but he hath not: And they say, *The Lord will not require what they have done*: But, as the Lord lives and

and reigns, he will repay them to their Faces, all of them together ; He will repay them from the greatest to the least : As God lives, from the King to the lowest, there shall not be one *Item*, but he will pay them severely for all the Mischiefs they have done. What are they ? Take me as many Kings and Counsellors, as would ly between me and the Sun, they are no more, but as a Pile of Grass before God ; they are nothing, and less than nothing : And he will care no more for the abominable Party, that we call *Rulers*, to tread them in the lowest Hell, than I, when I tread a Worm under my Feet. Yea, his own People, they have many sad Days and Nights about their Sin ; though they wash, and do all to keep themselves from Sin, yet they have sore Bones, and enough to do with it. And do you think, that such an abominable Party, that hath affronted Jesus Christ to his Face, (yea, we may say of our Rulers and Clergy, they have flung out a Flag of Desfiance against God, they have defied him before Sun and Moon, and all the World) and he is sitting with all these Affronts ? But he will come out in Battle-Array against them. As he lives, he will lay them in the Dust ere it be long. Will ye throw them, Sirs ? believe ye our great Folks, our abominable Declaration-Takers ? do ye believe hellish Prelates ? do ye believe our abominable Curates, and selfeish wicked Noblemen ? Do ye think these Gentlemen will escape the Hand of God ? Not at all. As he lives, he'll thresh them down and their Houses, and make their Posterity Beggars ; he will bring his Indignation on them, so that the Generation to come will hiss at them. I profess this, any Body that considers Matters at this Day, will see this
 Generation

Generation perfectly out of their Wits. I confess, it is a hard Matter for a Man to be saved, even when he is most circumspect and watchful; But Oh! to think, what will come on this Generation: I'll tell you, not only the Wicked and persecuting Party, and complying Party, will be overthrown, but even his own will not escape, *Ezek.* 21. 3, 4, 5, 10, 11. We verily believe this, and who lives shall see it, that even his own People, even these that have the Root of the Matter in them, God will overthrow, and he will send them in his Anger through Death; and he will spare few Ministers, yea few Nonconformist Ministers; he'll have them to die in the Wilderness; so there shall be but a few shall come through, and see the Glory of the Lord. I fear there are few that will be found for God. And I'll tell you, verily I trow, ther's few Ministers will be found what they ought to have been, and few People such as they should have been, as to keeping of clean Fingers. This has been a blecking Time, a tempting Time: at first it blecked all Sorts of Folks, alas! the People were all blecked in the Beginning with hearing of Curates, complying with Prelacy, and many Folks turned secure, and wylie and warry; all have bent their Tongues to lie, but none has been valiant for God, and his Truth, up and down *Scotland*; few have been free for him, but a deep sort of Compliance amongst all Sorts of Folk. I'll tell you truly, what I do think is the Lord's Mind, and this it is: I think the Lord will rid himself of this Generation; I think he has sworn in his Anger, that until he have their Heads under the Ground, he will never do good for *Scotland*; he has sworn, until he have this

Generation

Generation, Ministers and Professors, in their Winding-sheets, and the Worms eating them up, he'll still stretch forth his Hand against *Scotland*. They have been a Pack, that has not been for God.

I do not deny, but a Remnant shall be saved, but I trow, ye need not thicke Houses with the Remnant that shall be saved : They'll not be so many as Folk trows. I assure you, they will be odd Sort of Folk whom God will save. They will be a small Sort of Ministers, Professors and Christians that he will spare ; but he will have their Carcasses harled out of the way. I profess I think the Land has gone quite wrong. As for our Rulers, what are they ? *Incarnate Devils* ; as for our Noblemen, we can hear tell of none of them for God ; indeed we deny not, there are some better than other some. Some have some sort of Religion in Heart, but dare not much avow it. As for our Gentlemen, for all of them we can get in *Scotland*, ye may write them in three Inches of Paper. And, as for Ministers, they are few, and Christians some more, but not very many : And I assure you, spare whom the Lord will, he'll not spare Professors : I think he will spare the ignorant People in the North, that have not known his Name ; but as for them that have known him and his mighty Works, he'll have them harled out of the Way. And I think he may spare the young People that are rising, the young Things that know nothing ; but as for the old Children, that have not been good, he'll have them out of the way : He'll not let them live at all, that have exceedingly corrupted themselves. It would not have been thought, that *Scotland* should have become so naughty. I

think Professors in Scotland turn incarnate Devils; and of all the Noblemen that shall appear for God, and of the Gentlemen of Scotland, there shall not be Twenty of them (I trow I have doubled them) from the one End to the other, that shall be down-right for God. Who would have believed that Scotland would have turned so naughty? Scotland has been but a Nation full of Hypocrisy; nothing but a whited Wall: stay till all the Play be played, and he'll make a clean Land. He'll not come with a Rake, but with a Besom, and that Besom shall sweep Malignants, Prelates, Gentlemen and Noblemen; it shall sweep them and their Posterity away; and it shall sweep Professors also away. And I assure you, even the very Godly, that have been most free for God in their personal and particular Walk, it shall be much for them to win through; it shall be much for them not to be overthrown in the Deluge of Wrath that is coming. I warrant you, there be many saying, *they shall never be moved*; as David said *Psal. 30. 6. many say in their Heart, Psal. 10. 6. I shall not be moved, for I shall never be in Adversity*: But stay till God arise and plead, and he shall bring Adversity on these that are at Ease in Zion, and trust in the Mountains of Samaria, *Amos. 6. 1.* and can carry handsomely in Troubles: These shall go into Captivity with the first that go Captive. For I think, this Land does not believe that there is a God, and believes not that *He'll either do Good or Evil. Zeph. 1. 12.* I see that this is settled in the Imaginations of the Herats of all Ranks of People in Scotland. I profess, if the Lord tarry many Years away, I think Scotland shall become a Company of Devils, and desperate Atheists; and I think they shall forget God, and shall call the Proud happy, and shall say
it,

it is in vain to serve the Lord. *Mal. 3. 14, 15.* and shall think these the wisest Folk, that can comply best and follow the present Times. I'll tell you, I trow many Folk has been dreaming of Deliverance, both Ministers and Professors; but if ye dream aright, ye will dream, that God will come and send Indignation and Warth, and he'll come and make *Scotland* tremble, and overwhelm it as by the Flood of *Egypt*, *Isa. 10. 24.* I'll tell you, if *Scotland* had deliverance, it were not telling them, the Professors of *Scotland* would run red-wood. They are fitter for their Grave. I can assure you, he must have *Scotland* delivered of *Scotland*, and to be rid of this Generation, is a great Part of its Delivery. These Things are Dreams, that many do fancy, The Lord has not such Thoughts. I assure you, They shall be odd-Folks that shall stand when he appears: They shall be Folk that has nither touched, tasted, nor handled with all these Times. If ye will take the Deliverance right, take this of it; when the Lord will deliver *Scotland*, there shall be glorious Days in it, but it shall be a costly Deliverance; and he will have the Thick of all Sorts of Folk, especially Ministers, swept away, ere that Deliverance come: And he'll have another Sort of People, than the luke-warm formal Professors: He'll have another Sort of People, both Ministers and Professors, than at this Day he has; he'll have Folk that will not seek their own Things, but his Things; for if he cannot get a Church for his Mind, he cares not for it; he cares not for to cast it in the Sea. What cares he for the Laws of Men, for King or Council? They are but before him as Dirt: He'll have a Church fitted for glorifying of him, or none at all. *Ye are like the Children of the Ethiopian unto me, Amos 9. 7.* What

am I concerned with you ? What art thou *Scotland* to me more than the *Turks*, or *Americans* ? What cares he for Ministers and Professors ? He can raise as good out of the Stones : He will have them harled out of the Way. I'll tell you, verily I think, there be few down-right for God in any Thing I can take up. There's very few *Calebs* and *Joshuas*. It seems a strange Thing, that many think, he'll take clarry, defiled *Scotland*. Nay, he'll have *Scotland* swept ; he'll have *Scotland* wip'd ; he'll have it turned upside down, ere it be a Dish for his Service. There's many think he'll take *Scotland*, and all the Sins, and Filthiness that is in it ; and why may he not make our Rulers repent ; and a Number of such Things : Indeed he can make them to repent ; but truly I'll tell you, he has a Mind to hurle them out of the Gate. Nay, he has a Mind to hurle the Godly out of the Gate : He'll rid himself of the Godly, that has the Root of the Matter in them, that have not been even down for him : And do ye think that he'll spare the malignant Party ? They shall not be spared ; if one Hell be hotter than another, they shall get it.

Use 2. Are the Righteous scarcely saved ? I would speak a Word to them that are here ; Whence is it that several of you have Confidence, that ye shall be saved ? But the Righteous are hardly saved ; it is all that they are saved. I think, whoever is most godly will say, it is very much for them to get the Hope that they shall be saved. I remember the Saying of a godly Man in *Air*, when he was a dying, he says this, *So long Time I have not gone the Length of the Marke Cross without Christ, without Thoughts of God ; yet I am in doubt now about my Salvation. What think ye of that, Sirs ?* It is reported of one who li-

ved many Years retired, and wholly taken up about
 the Matters of his Salvation ; yet, after so long
 Time retiring, he was in great Vexation and Per-
 plexity about his State for all that : We speak not
 this to discourage you, as if the Work of Religion
 were an hard intollerable Work ; but I'll tell you
 the Even-down of it, the Man that's saved, he goes
 through the Pricks ; 'tis all he escapes with his Life.
 'Tis a very Truth, the Man that shall wrestle, weep
 and cry, and shall ly out of his Bed when others
 are in it, shall keep a Distance from Sin, and be
 humbled for it, and shall have that much Religion,
 that all his Neighbours shall wonder at it : When
 a Man has been many Days, Nights, Weeks and
 Years, seriously taken up about this Work of his Sal-
 vation, minding nothing in Comparison of it, daily
 mourning over Sin, mortifying a Body of Sin and
 Death ; yet it is much for that Man to win to the
 Peace of God, that has taken all this Pains. I'll tell
 you what I do really think, Religion is another Bu-
 siness than Folk think it to be. I wish many of them
 that has but a clipped Religion, that will not carry
 to Heaven ; that they knew the Exercise of the truly
 godly. I think that is made out in this Genera-
 tion, *Many have in Words a Form of Godliness,*
but indeed deny the Power of it. I'll tell you, we have
 observed, there would come out of a Place Three
 or Four Thousand, and among all these Four Thou-
 sand, in the most Places of *Scotland*, ye shall not get
 me Fifty that are truly religious, in the Judgment
 of Charity. And take again these Fifty, and ye
 shall see, 'tis much if there be Forty that have the Ex-
 perience of Heart-work. Ye may possibly think this
 severe Language ; yet we say, we have observed there
 would come out of a Place Three or Four Thousand ;

in the Judgment of Charity, there was not Fifty of them, that a judicious Person could say, upon Search, were religious, and Christians indeed. They have another Walk, praying in Families and alone, and have a good Meaning in Heart. Religion is a fell Thing, a serious Business. It is much *to take the Kingdom of Heaven by Violence*, Matth. 11. 12. It is a great Matter for a Man to get an Eye to Christ, to get Corruption mortified, and his Heart set on Things above. I remember what one says of Folks mistaking of Grace, *Grace is nothing but Christ conquering, triumphing, and fighting in the Soul; where Grace is, there is much Hammering between Grace and Corruption*. I assure you, it is no small Matter for a Man to be redeemed from Death, for a devilish Creature to turn a heavenly Creature; *To have his Life hid with Christ in God*. Col. 3. 3. Religion is an uncouth Business; truly when I have heard of the Seriousness of several Folks, I thought strange of it. All the Religion of the most Part is, to give the Lord a Good-evening, and a Good-morrow in Prayer, and hearing of Preachings, that never knew what it was to be pursuing after Salvation to Purpose, never knew what it was to be concerned in their Souls, as to the forgetting all other Things in Comparison of this; never knew what it was to see the Lord Jesus and his Sufficiency, and a new Way struck out to them, that they knew not before; never knew what it was to prevent the Morning with their Cries. It is a very Truth, and a general-one, the most Part of Professors will prove *foolish Virgins* in the End of the Day; and I'll tell you, that I am sure of it, if thou be a *wise Virgin*, thou hast suspected, that thou wast a foolish Virgin; and a great Work has it been to thee to get it cleared, that thou wast *one of the wise*

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Virgins, and costly was it to thee to get the new Name, and the white Stone, Rev. 2. 17. But I profess I know not what you mean to do, how ye intend to be saved, or on what Ground ye have builded; but for my Part, when I have even conferred with Folk, I found few of them could give me a Reason of their Hope, but senselessly would say, They hoped to come to Heaven, and had no more: But I would say, *the Righteous are hardly saved.* I knew some serious Persons that had been Christians Fifty Years, yet had Fears about their Salvation. I think this of you; there are severals of you has little Religion; I think a Man would buy it over dear of a Shilling: Ye think that ye are going to Heaven, ay, but few come there; but I say, if ye knew the Religion of these that are religious to Purpose, they would astonish you, and make you wonder, as it is said of the Daughters of *Jerusalem*, when the Spouse was seeking her Beloved, *Can. 5. 9.* I assure you, it is another Christ, another Salvation, another Heaven and another Glory they are aiming at, than the most Part of Folk are seeking. If ye knew the Religion of many, ye would stand astonished at it. Will ye but answer this Question; ye know there is a Heaven, Whether or no do ye believe it? And that there is a Hell, and that is true: Will ye tell me, which of these Two hope ye every one to land in, at the End of the Day? Whether hope ye to be saved or damned? Which of these Two will ye end in? Whether in Salvation or Damnation? All have Hope, but I will tell you, the Devil and your own Hearts have conspired to make you Fools, that you cannot distinctly know of what Sort it is: I think some of you have Hope, but ye dare not say ye are certain, or that ye have sure Ground to build on; but

but because ye pretend the righteous Way. But I beseech you, if ye can hearken to it, try whether your Hope be the right Hope or not. There be some Folk build their Hope on an unsure Foundation, and it is false : And what if your Hope be built on such a Foundation ? For many have their Hope on such a Ground, that for a Thousand Worlds I would not have mine so. Ye cannot make it out that ye have an Interest in Christ. Canst thou prove, Man, that thou art in the Faith ? What Confidence hast thou that thou wilt come to Heaven ? The most Part deal with slippery Fingers in a Matter of so great Importance. Cast not away your Souls, nor ruin or damn your Souls eternally ; in the mean Time ye know not but ye shall rest eternally in Hell : For many are sleeping, and the Devil is drawing the very Thapple out of them. Says another, it may be, I am in Christ ; but if you make Pillows of that, till the Devil carry you captive to Hell, I tell you, ye are Atheists that settle upon, that *maybe ye are in Christ*. It may be ye will go to Heaven ; yea it may be ye be damned eternally. Nay, says another, *It is more likely that I am in Christ, than that I am not*. Now, how prove you that, That it is more likely that you are in Christ ? That's an uncouth Business. 'Tis an Herb that grows not in every Garden. Truly Atheists think it likely that they will go to Heaven : Every Body has a Thought that they will go there ; but happy are they that have not their Hope built on such a Foundation, as breaks all in Blawds. The foolish Virgins thought they would certainly win to Heaven : It is very much for a Man to have the Experience and the Perswasion of a serious Heart-work. I have seen Folk very serious, and yet it was an uncouth Difficulty

to be sure that they would be saved; whereas Atheists, who have not a Plack's Worth of Religion, hope to be saved, and yet sleep in a sound Skin. I'll tell you, all is not Gold that glisters. There are many religious Curates in the Land, that will not be such in Eternity : Any Man would think that Man religious, but his Religion will not be current up above. But I say to thee, Man, if thou hast not tried it by the Touchstone of the Scriptures, and found thy Religion to be good and current ; I say, thou art a perfect Atheist : For the Way that Folk try Gold, if it be counterfeit, is by the Touchstone. Now, the Touchstone that Folk should take themselves to, is the Scripture. Canst thou prove by the Scripture, the Spirit of God by that Touchstone letting you see, that ye are religious ? But I trow, take and weigh many of us in the Balance of the Sanctuary, and we will be found very light. I would wish many of you were doubting of your clipped Religion : This is the Ruin of the most Part of the World, like such as take Money, and look not if it be good or bad, and so they are cheated. Many Folk never question or examine themselves about it; but remember, *the righteous are scarcely saved*. I can assure you, 'tis much for a Man to win to Salvation, even when he is wonder serious. I can assure you of this, many have watched Day and Night, and have cried, and shouted, and repented, and yet are stark naught this Day; many such religious Men are in the Pit this Day. I know a Man living this Day, that is a Drunkard, a Declaration Taker, that was so serious once, that he hardly slept, being so taken up about his Salvation, and lived godly ; and yet is an Atheist this Day. I believe many of you never had a perplexed Day about your Souls, and yet ye think ye

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are religious ; and if ye had any Convictions, they were but cut Fingers, that were soon healed again, like the Seratch of a Pin. If I had but one Word to say, I would say this, Be sure ye be in Christ, that the Devil and your deceitful Heart be not deceiving you. I pray you take heed, have Oyl in your Lamps, for there are many lukewarm Folk in this Generation.

Use 3. There is a third Word of Use ; There are some truly godly; ye have Difficulty in winning to the Light of his Countenance, to Grace, to have Dominion over Sin, &c. Ye are many Times thinking, *Is there any Sorrow like my Sorrow?* Be content, for the Truth is (as Mr. Rutherford saith) we would have Two Summers in one Year, a Heaven here, and a Heaven hereafter. 'Tis very fair if ye go to Heaven in a bloody winding Sheet. *Davia* was soon puzzled in that Case, that he should be such an afflicted Man as he was; *Psal. 73. 13. Verily I have cleansed my Heart in vain, and washed my Hands in Innocency: For all the Day long have I been plagued, and chastened every Morning.* And for my Part, I know one these Seventeen Years has been in a constant Terror of Soul ; and I trow many here have never had so much, as that Person hath had in one Hour. I say, 'Tis very well, that you are saved, and go not to Hell eternally. 'Tis well, though a Man be tossed in Body and Soul every Way, if he get Heaven in the End of the Day ; if he should lose Health and Means, Wife and Children, and be troubled every Day, and get Heaven, 'tis very well. I confess there are many in this Generation must have all, especially in their Day ; but I think it very well, *when the Lord is plucking up what he had planted, and throwing down that which he had built,* if a Man get his Soul for a Prey, *Jer. 45. 5. While it is so, seek not great Things*

Things for thy self; if ye get Heaven, though ye swim through a Sea of Troubles, 'tis very well. There are Two Things that every Man would be at, until he get a little more Wit in his Head. 1. To be above Sin, that he be in Hazard no more. 2. To be above all Clouds of Desertion, and to sail fair before the Wind. But when he lives Ages, he must be content to have Clouds, and to have a Body of Death to fight with; he must fall and rise; he must ride the Foord as he finds it, and take it as he comes to. My Friends, be content, if ye can get Heaven, and have any Assurance of that. The Lord will hold up his own; but the Truth is, ye will get a Sea Voyage, before ye step within the Gate of Heaven; Corruption will follow you, and will not leave you, until you be within the Threshold thereof; and till then Satan will pursue: But when you are there, all your Enemies will take the Retreat, and shall never vex you any more; but resolve, ye must meet with Troubles, and Perplexity and Waves, &c. But here is Comfort; ye shall not be made Shipwreck; there will come upon you Mountains of Waves, as if they would overturn you, but they shall not prevail. *Surely in the Floods of great Waters they shall not come nigh unto you*, Psal. 32. 6. Only this I say, I pray you take this Note with you; for I think many serious Folks cannot get Sin under Foot, and to have the Countenance of God, yet we must be content. Ye may say, if I could have Assurance of Heaven, I would be better content. Nay, my Friends, ye must be content to have Darknes as well as Assurance; ye must be content with what ye meet, for Unbelief and Sin is the Cause of it. Well, if Folk win to Heaven, 'tis very well if ye escape with the Skin on your Teeth. I warrant you, ye would be

at Ease : Our *indulged* Folk, they would be at Ease, and when this deceitful Liberty was a coming, all would have dreamed of Ease, and to have slept in a sound Skin ; you shall get Ease enough in Heaven, hold your Tongue. Let us take God's Way as long as we are here. 'Tis a strange Business, what would Folk do so much with Ease ? If we were to live here eternally, Folk might study an Ease of their own ; but we will not be long here : Let us be faithful for God. Truly, for my Part, I would never shed a Tear, though God overthrow all these Lands : The Lord hath shaken a few out of their Ease : He is coming, is it Time for you to sit at Eases ? Is it Time for you, O ye, to dwell in cieled Houses, and his House ly waste ? *Hag.* 1. 4. God cannot get a House to set his Gospel in : But you must have your cieled Houses. I would not care though he should burn *Glasgow* and *Edinburgh*, and all, if they will not act for God. Many thought it strange to see the stately Piece of *Glasgow* burning, but I thought nothing of it ; why ? They have burnt the Covenant, and ruined the Work of Reformation ; they have laid waste our pleasant Things. What though *Glasgow* and *Edinburgh* both be burnt ? A great Business, if God be honoured. Let never Man care, whether or not, People and Houses should be in the Bottom of the Sea. It is a Generation which hath blasphemous Thoughts in them : They think that God was made (so to say) for them ; and *Scotland* was made that they might dwell in it, and build Houses. The World was made to serve God, and if they will not sway for him, what Use is there for any of them, be they Kings, Noblemen, or Malignants ? A great Matter though he should take them, and send them down to Hell ; they are not worth a
 Plack

Plack all together : Folks Thoughts of Things are clean wrong.

Use 4. But a Fourth Word of Use ; *Is the Righteous scarcely saved ?* Then I would say, Truly ye had need to be exact, watchful, and diligent : For I suppose ye are all wrong that are not at this Work. God's Anger is great against this Generation. But ye will say, How shall I be so watchful and so diligent, as that I may be in good Terms with him, that he may have no Controversy against me, when he comes ? Are ye thinking thus ? God is coming against *Britain*, (as he lives) in Battle he shall come, and ding down King, and Nobles, and Prelates ; and he shall send forth Hell and Damnation among them : He'll take Vengeance on this Land ! Then whether or not are ye studying to walk righteously now ? I will tell you, that Religion that served to carry a Man through at another Time, at *Montrose's* Day, or *Dunbar*, that shall not carry a Man through in these Times of *Scotland's* Trials. I assure you, he shall be a strange Man, that when God comes in Fury against these Lands, shall not be hit with a Stroke. I'll tell you what I think, I believe there be severals that have not the least Doubt, but they shall escape the Wrath that is coming upon these Lands ; yet I think it an Error to think to escape the Wrath that is coming on these Lands ; for many will escape eternal Wrath that will not escape it. Therefore ye had need to be exact in your private Walk ; ye had need to be on your Watch-tower. I profess, not only the foolish Virgins, but the wise Virgins will be found sleeping, when God will come. I trow, there will be few that shall not tremble when he comes ? Folk that are most righteous will scarcely be saved. I assure you, God will mow down the Professors.

*feffors in Scotland, even as a Man moweth down
 Grass.* The Sinners in *Zion*, and Hypocrites in
 Heart ; there will be few, but he will have some-
 thing against them. He will say to some, Ye have
 heard the Curates, and never mourned for it ; and
 to others he will say, Ye preached not in all Ha-
 zard ; ye were not diligent in Season and out of
 Season, but lurked and shunned Hazard. To o-
 thers, Ye gave no Warning : To others, Ye did not
 redeem the Time ; Many Sermons ye have heard,
 but little Instruction have ye taken. To others he
 will have to say, Ye made a Confederacy with the
 Enemy. To the Gentlemen he will have to say, The
 Thing ye minded was only Dirt ; I shall make Soul
 and Body and all to smart for these Things. I trow
 there will be few but he will have a sore Dittay a-
 gainst them in that Day, he will have uncouth
 Things to say to Folk : He will find very few such
 as he would have them to be. I beseech you, be reli-
 gious to Purpose ; God is coming. *Lot* and *Noah*
 preached Righteousness to the old World, yet they
 were not the better ; and this Generation is perswa-
 ded, That Hell and Damnation will be, and yet
 they are hardened and given up to the Devil to be
 deluded. Truly, I'll tell you, 'tis well, if there
 be one in a Parish that's so righteous : For my
 Part, I find few Ministers and Professors, but
 they are quite wrong ; and as for Folks private and
 publick Walk, there are few serious Seekers of
 God, so as to redeem the Time. Oh ! I'll tell you,
 where I think the Life of Religion lies ; 'tis about
 the Border and about *Tiviotdale*, and about *Mearnes*
 and *Angus* ; and these Professors that are helpless
 to them must be swept away : They have gotten
 such a wrong Cast, that they cannot be serious,
 they cannot frame their Doings to seek the Lord,
 there

there is such a Spirit of Senselesness amongst all. I pray you that are acquainted with this Parish, tell them, God shall give to *Westmonkland* such an Awakning, as shall cause all their Heads find the Smart of it.

They had a Minister that took much Pains, when he was present with them ; yet as to the Generality, they have turned unconcerned, like *Reuben* : If they get something to the Back, and Belly, they care not for these Things : But I'll tell you, the Cursed Borderers up and down, that have become zealous for the Trough, shall rise and condemn this Parish. If God Plague not *Westmonkland* (except there be serious Repentance) I am far mistaken. They say, they have gotten some Dirt in the World, and they hug that in their Arms, and they are not for other Things ; but I wish it were rather in the Botom of the Sea ; I wish it were away. But I tell you this one thing, I am sure there's none that prefers Dung to Christ and Duty, but the Lord shall sweep them and it both away. I am assured, there's many that shall curse the Day that ever they were Laird or Lord, that ever they had Riches, but shall wish that they had had but a Brat about their Head going from Door to Door. This is the Thing, if I could word it, Ordinary Religion and Diligence will not do the Business. I assure you, you had need to get the Matter very clear, and have your Testament lying beside you ; Hast thou been dying daily ? hast thou been suffering daily ? That is to say, Hast thou been fore-casting these Things ? Hast thou been thinking, what shall I do, if the Papists should rise and cut the Throats of this Generation ? both mean Men and great Men, Our King and Council

Council are all dreaming : That is no strange Business (for readily great Folk are ay dreaming) but Professors, and the Godly, they are dreaming too : There are few awake, few upon their Feet, few upon their Watch-Tower this Day. In a Word, all will have enough a do with it, when he shall come.

Use 5. A fifth Word of Use. Are the righteous scarcely saved ? I then pray you do not misinterpret ; when Judgement comes upon these Lands, say not, they had no Religion in them ; when it comes to that ; when God comes to punish *Scotland*, many a Man that had his Heart right with God, will go to the Grave that Day : Mistake not his Way when he smites some ; think not that ye are right, and they are wicked. And as for that he hath burnt many Folks Houses, think not strange ; It is well if Folk be not burnt themselves ; it is a small Business they have met with, in Comparison of their Sin : It is nothing at all. I wish you and all others to Escape, though ye had twenty Houses burnt to the Ground ; I wish we may escape though the Houses be cast down. For I assure you, many an honest Man hath been stabbed in his Bed, and the Body cast out to the Dogs, and his Blood shed upon the ground : That was the Way they went to Heaven : But this I would say to you, do not mistake these Things that the People of God meet with. We have heard of some godly Folk, that it would have made a Man's Heart sore, and his Hair to stand up, to have seen or heard the Afflictions they were in. Do not misinterpret that Fire, and think not these were greater Sinners than others, so to think these Folk were more guilty than your selves.

Nay

Nay the devilish Bishops Houses escaped, and the Churches that are polluted escaped, and that proves the Contrary : But I'll tell you what was the Language of it, not only to them that were under the present Danger, but to the rest of the City, and to the Country, that saw the Sight of it. This was the Language of the Rod to the Rulers, King and Council, Will ye not let out the Prisoners yet? It tells, He can let them out, and this shall be a Mean thereof to your Damage. There is one, whom they took before, and they had taken him unjustly again, and that contrary to their own Laws, by this he must escape. I tell you, there is a Day coming when God shall burn *Britain*, and until that Time, his Prisoners shall never be all free, but he will cause that Fire loose them, when he shall inclose the Wicked in the Fire eternally. I remember a Word spoken by *Jeremiab* to *Zedekiab*, when they were commanded to let the Servants go free, Well, says *Jeremiab*, Will ye not proclaim Liberty? Jer. 34. 17. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, ye have not hearkned unto me in proclaiming Liberty, every one to his Brother, and every Man to his Neighbour : behold, I proclaim a Liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the Sword, to the Pestilence, and to the Famine, and I will make you be removed unto all the Kingdoms of the Earth. Well, the Lord shall proclaim Liberty to the Sword, &c. and he will let the Prisoners go free, and for that End the Fire must go up and down the City. The Lord shall proclaim Liberty to Hell and Damnation, to take them all down into it, if they repent not. I could wish, that they would repent : But

since they are running on in their evil Way, they are still hardning themselves, till the Lord make himself rid of them. 2. It cries also, *Rev. 14. 7. Fear God, and give Glory to him, for the Hour of his Judgment is come; and Worship him that made Heaven and Earth, and the Sea, and the Fountains of Waters.* Fear God that can burn such Houses. There is such Fear of Councils, Troops and Soldiers; but the Lord can do that in a short Time, that they cannot do in a long Time. I believe the Lord has done more hurt to *Glasgow* by the Fire, than the Council and Troopers have done all these Years by gone. It is he that maketh the Summer and Winter, yet no Fear of Him; but strange is the Fear of Men: These Lands are soon feared for any Thing of little Worth, that may expose them to the Trouble of godly Men: Ye fear not to break the Laws of God; but ye fear to break the Laws of Men. What needs us care for them? Let us fear him. 3. The Burning did speak this, *Labour not for the Meat that perisheth, but for that which endures to everlasting Life. Set your Affections on Things above, and not on Things on Earth. Col. 3. 2. Lay up your Treasure in Heaven.* It had this Cry also, that Folk should not trust in uncertain Riches. I warrand you, many a Man took much Pains to rickle up these Stones that the Fire burnt, that have forgotten God in Prayer. I warrand you, there was more Pains taken in building these Stones, than was taken by many about their Salvation. 4. It cries, Have your Treasure in Heaven, making sure of some Thing, that cannot be taken from you. *Mary* hath chosen the better Part, and no Man

will

will take it from her. *Luke. 10. 42.* Let not Folk set their Affections on Things of the World. Ye see Lordships and Lairdships cooped from Hand to Hand: And a Man will not stand to sell his Soul for a Bit of Ground for his Posterity; and it may be, he that comes after will debauch all. It says, Seek a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, an Habitation that cannot be dissolved. 5. Another thing that it cries, Is it Time to plaister your Houses, and his People wandering? It is observed, that it is the best Place of *Glasgow* that is burnt; and I trow both *Glasgow* and *Edinburgh* shall be in the Hows, ere all the Play be played; many Gentlemen and Noblemens Houses shall go all to the Hows. 6. It hath another Cry; It cried, There was such Sin committed in these Houses, be what Houses they will, as might have been the Cause to provoke him to smite the Walls. Again, 7. It cried also, Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish, *Luke. 13. 3.* It says to the rest of *Glasgow*, If ye seek not, and fear not God, he will send some sad Thing against you: For when he sends his Judgments, they have a lowd Voice to other Folk to take Heed. Therefore I beseech you take Heed. These People that had their Houses burnt, the Night before dreamed as little of Judgment, as ye do now. And *Malignants* and *Prelates* dream as little of Judgment, and the Devil thinks long to have them, and he'll get them Time enough. Many of you think, that no Judgment is coming on: What Ground can you have, that ye are secure? They are happy that are secure on good Ground. I beseech you therefore by the

Mercies of God, and as ye love the welfare of your own Souls, search your Ways, try your Way, and turn to the Lord; Few spend Time in Prayer as they ought. Now we shall say no more but this search out the evil of your Way; pray for En-
lightening, and the Lord make you consider these things. To him be everlasting Praise. Amen.

FINIS.

1 JA 64



The just COPY of a

LETTER,

Written by

Mr. *John McClelland*, Mini-
ster of *Kirkcudbright*,

T O

JOHN Lord *Kirkcudbright*.

20th February, 1649.

My Noble Lord,

I Have received your Lordship's Letter, of Date
February 16th, and do acknowledge my Ob-
ligations to your Lordship to be re-doub-
led. I long much to hear what Decision
follows on that Debate concerning *Patronages*. Upon
the most exact Trial, they will be found a great
Plague to the Kirk, and an Obstacle to the Propaga-
tion of Religion: I have Reason to hope, That such
a wise and well constitute Parliament will be loath
to

to leave that Yoke upon the Churches, so little advantageous to any Man, and so prejudicial to the Work of God, as hath been many Times represented: Yea, no Question, but the most Part of the Members of Parliament, and the whole Kingdom hath suffered under it. Men may conceive peradventure, that it is an Amplifying of the Ministers Privileges, but all the Profit shall not redound to the Ministry, but to the several Flocks. Certainly the removing of it were the stopping of the Way to *Simony*, except we will apprehend, that whole Presbyteries will be bribed! For Patronages, I can say no more, but what Christ said to the *Pharisees*, *Non sic fuit a principio. The pure primitive Church knew nothing of it.*

But as for these previous Dispositions to a Rupture among the Sectaries, I can say nothing to them, only this, I conclude their Judgment sleeps not: Shall they escape? Shall they break the Covenant, and be delivered? Seeing they have despised the Oath of God by breaking the Covenant; when, lo, they have given the Hand, and have done all these Things; they shall not escape, *Ezek. 17. 16, 18, 19.* which I dare apply to *England* (I hope) without any wresting of Scripture, *And therefore, thus saith the Lord God, As I live, surely mine Oath that he hath despised, and my Covenant that he hath broken, even it will I recompence on his own Head; and I will spread my Net upon him, and he shall be taken in my Snare.* This Covenant was made with *Nebuchadnezzar*, and the Matter was civil, but the Tye religious; wherefore the Lord owns it as his Covenant, because God's Name was invocated and interponed in it, and He called to be Judge and Witness. *England's* Covenant was not made with *Scotland* only, but with the high

high and mighty God, principally for Reformation of his House; and it was conceived in the most solemn Manner that ever I read of; so that ye may see it God's Covenant, both formally and materially; and the Lord did second the making thereof with more than ordinary Success to that Nation: Now it is manifestly despised and broken in the sight of all Nations; therefore it remains that the Lord should avenge the Quarrel of his Covenant. *England* has had to do with the *Scots, French, Danes, Saxons, Normans, and Romans*, but they had never such a Party to deal with, as the Lord of Armies, leading for the Violation of his Covenant. They have tasted some Covenant Blessings; they are to receive some Covenant Curses upon their Parliaments, Armies, Navies, Cities, Castles, and fair palaces. *English Men* shall be made Spectacles to all Nations for a broken Covenant. When the living God swears, *As I live, even the Covenant that he hath despised, and the Oath that he hath broken, will I recompence upon his own Head*; There is no Place left for doubting. Hath the Lord said it? Hath he sworn, and will he not do it? His Assertion is Ground of Faith, his Oath a Ground of full Assurance of truth. If all *England* were as one Man united in judgment and Affection, and if it had a Wall round about it, reaching to the Sun, and if it had as many Armies as it has Men, and if every Soldier had the Strength of *Goliath*, and if their Navies could cover the Ocean; and if there were none to peep at, or move the Tongue against them; yet, I dare not doubt of their Destruction, when the Lord hath sworn by his Life, he will avenge the Breach of Covenant. ----- when, and by whom, and in what Manner

ner he will do it, I do profess Ignorance, and do leave
to his glorious Majesty, his own Latitude, and
will commit it to him, and look up. I laugh at
their new Model of a Platonic Republick: They re-
solve, no King, but the Day is coming, when a
King will count it great Happiness to be from them,
and their Muries; and our King and his House are
not more despicable in their Eyes, nor they shall be
in the Eyes of all Rulers. Who knows but Eng-
land, who now says, *We will have no King*, shall be
supplicating for Shelter under the Wings of some
Prince, and shall be disdained? There is much
more than all this included in their Judgment.

My Lord, I live and will die, (if I be called
home before that Time) in the assured Hope of the
Ruin of all God's Enemies in that Land.

So I commit your Lordship and your Lady
to the Grace of God, and rests,

Your Lordship's humble Servant in Christ,

John St. Clelland.

1 JA 64

*Copied from the Example, August 11. 1650. and
now compared with other Copies.*
